

Message Text

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70

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TAGS: ELAB, PINT, GW

SUBJECT: WILDCAT STRIKES: SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD BACKS

BRANDT CRITICISM OF JUSOS

REF: BONN 12181, 12719, 12307, 12417

1. SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD, MEETING SEPT 9, ENDORSED BRANDT'S SHARP CRITICISM OF JUSOS' SUPPORT OF WILDCAT STRIKES. JUSOS ARE STANDING BY THEIR POSITION, BUT BRANDT'S FIRM STAND HAS PLEASED MAINLINE AND WORKER WING ELEMENTS IN SPD QUARTERS.

2. BY VOTE OF 29 IN FAVOR, THREE ABSTENTIONS (RUDI ARNDT, WERNER VITT, WHO ALSO IS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE DGB CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION, AND PETER VON OERTZEN) AND THREE OPPOSED (WOLFGANG ROTH, HARRY RISTOCK AND HEINZ JUNKER), SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD ENDORSED BRANDT'S SEPT 4 STATEMENT (REFTEL) CONDEMNING JUSO SUPPORT OF WILDCAT STRIKES. SPD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BOERNER EMPHASIZED TO THE PRESS THAT EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION REMOVES ALL DOUBT ABOUT SPD POSITION AND DEMONSTRATES PARTY'S DESIRE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE TIES WITH TRADE UNIONS.

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3. JUSO CHAIRMAN ROTH, HOWEVER, STATED FOLLOWING THE VOTE THAT DISCUSSION WITHIN THE PARTY ON THIS SUBJECT IS NOT OVER AND THAT JUSOS CONTINUE TO CONSIDER SPONTANEOUS STRIKES AS LEGITIMATE. SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED FURTHER IN BRANDT'S MEETING SEPT 11 WITH JUSO EXECUTIVE BOARD.

4. COMMENT: IN CONTACTS WITH THE EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE, MANY LOWER-LEVEL SPD TRADE UNION FACTION LEADERS HAVE BELIEVED FOR SOME TIME THAT THE SPD AND DGB LEADERSHIP SHOULD TAKE A STAND SIMILAR TO THAT OF CHANCELLOR BRANDT'S TELEVISED AUGUST 28 SPEECH. THE RECENT WAVE OF WILDCAT STRIKES PROVIDED THE ISSUE AROUND WHICH THIS POLICY DEBATE WITHIN THE SPD HAS ESCALATED. ACTUALLY, THE SPD TRADE UNION COMMITTEE INCLUDING DGB LEADER HEINZ OSKAR VETTER AND METALWORKER LEADER EUGEN LODERER SUPPORTED BY LABOR MINISTER ARENDT RECOMMENDED TO CHANCELLOR BRANDT THAT HE TAKE SUCH A FIRM POSITION.

5. IN QUICK SUCCESSION AFTER CHANCELLOR BRANDT'S NATIONAL TELEVISION BROADCAST ON AUGUST 28, THE JUSOS' EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONDED WITH A CRITICAL STATEMENT ON SEPT 3 WHICH WAS AGAIN ANSWERED BY CHANCELLOR BRANDT ON SEPT 4 BEFORE THE SPD PRESIDUM. NOT SATISFIED WITH THE BRANDT STATEMENT, THE JUSOS MOBILIZED SUPPORT IN A PRESS STATEMENT SIGNED BY 33 BUNDESTAG DEPUTIES AND MORE THAN 70 FULL-TIME DGB TRADE UNION OFFICIALS SUPPORTING THE JUSO CRITICISM. CHANCELLOR BRANDT'S ANSWER WAS TO CALL FOR THE ABOVE VOTE OF THE SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING ON SEPT 9.

6. THIS NATIONAL LEVEL DISPUTE WITHIN THE SPD IS ALSO REFLECTED IN A SIMILAR DISPUTE IN MUNICH WITH REGIONAL BAVARIAN DGB DIRECTOR WILHELM ROTHE AND METALWORKER LEADER ERWIN ESSL, RESIGNING FROM THE MUNICH SPD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN PROTEST AGAINST THE JUSO INFLUENCED POLICY LINE TAKEN BY THE MUNICH SPD.

7. ONE OF THE RESULTS OF THIS DEBATE HAS BEEN A RAPID STEP-UP OF DGB AND SPD PARTY ACTIVITY TO CHANNEL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISCONTENT OVER THE RISING COST OF LIVING INTO SEVERAL ACTIONS INCLUDING A NATION-WIDE CONSUMER MOVEMENT CALLING FOR BOYCOTT OF MEAT AND OTHER FOOD ITEMS.

8. BOERNER COMMENTED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE AND OTHERS ARE VERY PLEASED THAT BRANDT DECIDED TO TAKE A STRONG PUBLIC POSITION ON DRAWING THE LINE WITH THE JUSOS. HOWEVER, CONTINUED INTERNAL DIVISIONS WITHIN

THE SPD AND THE DGB OVER SUCH POLICY ISSUES CONTINUE
WITH THE JUSOS AND THEIR LEFT SUPPORTERS WITHIN THE SPD
AND DGB CONTINUING TO DISAGREE PUBLICLY WITH THIS SPD
PARTY DECISION. HILLENBRAND

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